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ABSTRACT

Designed for use by local schools in developing language arts programs, this guide is organized into eight sections. An introductory section contains a rationale for language arts in the school program, discussions of the characteristics of a good language arts program and of student language rights, lists of general communication goals for students, and suggestions for use of the guide. Four sections list sequences of minimum skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking and suggest the appropriate grade level for introducing each skill. Two sections deal with alternative language arts programs for middle, junior high, and high schools, and a concluding section discusses special electives related to language arts. (FL)

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ALABAMA COURSE OF STUDY

LANGUAGE ARTS

K - 12

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INTRODUCTION

Rationale for Language Arts in the School Program

The importance of language arts in the Alabama Course of Study is demonstrated by the results of a study conducted during the academic year 1972-73 by the State Department of Education in cooperation with The University of Alabama and the Alabama Education Study Commission.

Representative educators, students, and laymen responding to questionnaires ranked sixty educational goals in order of importance. The goals ranked as the top five reflect an overwhelming concern for language arts and communication.

1. Acquire basic skills and understandings in communication (93 percent of respondents).
2. Use effectively the basic skills in reading (91 percent of respondents).
3. Demonstrate listening habits necessary for gaining intended meaning (85 percent of respondents).
4. Communicate effectively with others in writing (85 percent of respondents).
5. Communicate effectively in speaking (84 percent of respondents).

Although Alabama people agree on what these top educational goals are, not all school systems are achieving these goals fully. For example, as recorded in the State Department of Education, the standardized testing conducted annually statewide in grades four, eight, and ten indicates that many students are not reading as well as they might.

Achieving these goals is the shared responsibility of the community, parents, educators, and students themselves.

Characteristics of a Good School Program in Language Arts

A school program enabling every girl and boy to move toward these

goals is necessarily student centered. It recognizes each student's need for identity, understanding, and appreciation as well as skill mastery. It offers relevant experiences in language arts and tailors instruction to the individual. It facilitates movement through a skill sequence at the student's natural rate, neither forced nor delayed by age and grade norms. It offers stimulating and challenging materials that are multilevel and multisensory. It provides a rich environment--friendly, orderly, and nonthreatening. Always, it accepts the boy or girl as a person of worth and dignity, able to grow in competence and responsibility.

A student-oriented school program can be achieved by full cooperation and concern of legislators, parents, teachers, administrators at all levels, the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, teacher education institutions, and professional organizations working in concert. From their cooperative efforts will come the funds and staff necessary to provide leadership for curriculum development and effective teaching; to create environments suitable for learning; to obtain adequate supplies of books, periodicals, audiovisual materials, and other resources; to limit class size and teaching load for maximum efficiency according to standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the National Council of Teachers of English; and to enhance professional growth of all educators.

A Student's Own Language

From infancy to twelfth grade and beyond, every boy or girl moves on a personal continuum of language. Surrounded by attractive people and things, a baby explores with all senses, demands attention and care, and expresses feelings with sounds and movements. Encouraged by parents, teachers, and other friends, a child develops personal language, playing

with sounds and rhythms, sharpening senses, imitating and role playing, tuning in and tuning out, memorizing symbols, and discovering myriad ways to receive and send ideas. Given skillful guidance and approval, the student not only masters thought processes and communication skills but also acquires habits and attitudes of lifelong learning and companionable living. Language and the person become inseparable.

Language is personal: language belongs to a person, not the person to a language.

A wise teacher recognizes that students cannot be regimented in language progress. They cannot be marched precisely in step with one another along a highway of grade-level materials from Point 1 to Point 12. At their own speed and under their own power, students progress in language, like climbers zigzagging up mountains. A teacher, like an experienced mountaineer, points directions and shows paths for sure-footed climbing. A teacher can help a student feel proud of his climbing and eager to try the next steps. A good teacher keeps the perspective of a learner, too, seeing with Alexander Pope that "Alps on Alps arise."

General Goals for a Student

Through listening--

1. Follow the thread of conversations and discussions.
2. Become aware of requisite listening skills, and endeavor to improve these skills through purposeful effort.
3. Listen analytically and appreciatively.

Through speaking--

1. Express self as completely as required by total environment, including home, school, and community.

2. Become aware of different types and levels of usage, including social and occupational dialects.

3. Perceive the advantage of using standard English dialects in certain community or social situations.

4. Demonstrate competence in language by using it appropriately in a variety of situations and contexts.

5. Articulate and illuminate own point of view on issues of personal importance.

Through reading--

1. Learn to read proficiently and flexibly.

2. Perceive reading as one medium of communication among others, but still the medium through which most information needed in school is transmitted.

3. Recognize opinion, fact, prejudice, and fantasy encountered in reading.

4. Share the experiences of real and fictitious people, perceiving their motivations and values and analyzing their problems and possible solutions.

5. Make judgments and decisions based upon investigation and consideration of facts, events, and personal values relevant to the issue.

Through writing--

1. Understand that, basically, writing is speech written down.

2. Master elements of organization to make writing understandable to peers.

3. Master devices and conventions essential to clarity of written communication.

4. Apprehend concepts and principles of grammar necessary for writing to be easily understood by peers.

5. Write legibly and at a rate commensurate with ability.

6. Master basic elements of writing to the extent of being able to apply them appropriately to an assigned or chosen writing task.

7. Recognize, compare, and write about real and imaginary worlds.

8. If college-bound, recognize the quality of writing needed for success in college and work with peers and teacher to develop skills to that level.

Through using media--

1. Perceive relationships existing between various media and society at large and also perceive relationships between self and media.

2. Become aware of effects upon users and viewers of various media.

3. Develop methods and personal standards for interpreting and evaluating media presentations.

4. Explore media techniques and create media presentations.

For appreciation--

1. Become aware of how language is used: by society at large, commerce, government, the communications media, and self.

2. Develop appreciation for literary communication in the work of peers and professional authors.

3. Understand that personal thoughts are worth recording and that the difference between the student's own work and that of professionals is a matter of growth, talent, and technique.

4. Recognize that much literature is an artistic expression of alternative ways of living and demonstrate awareness of those ways in discussions centered around specific works of literature.

5. Verbalize sensory images elicited by artistic works.

6. Analyze the differences and similarities between two or more familiar works of art.

7. Appreciate the basic purposes of and differences between listening and speaking and reading and writing.

School Use of the Course of Study for Language Arts

This Course of Study for Language Arts is a foundation upon which curriculum guides may be developed in local school systems. The Course of Study itself is not intended to be a complete curriculum.

Schools wanting the framework for a conventional program in language

arts should use the sections titled "Minimum Requirements . . . ." Sequences of skills are listed there in four strands: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Though listed separately, these strands are interwoven in classroom practice. The approximate grade for introducing a skill is suggested, but schools should accommodate students' individual differences in readiness.

Administrators, counselors, and classroom teachers should work together to identify each student's interests, aptitudes, and achievement levels in language skills. To meet individual needs of many students, educators should organize instructional groups and activities carefully.

Elementary schools wanting to do more than meet minimum requirements will find many suggestions accompanying skill sequences and useful references listed in the Bibliography.

Secondary schools interested in innovations will find suggestions in the sections titled "Alternative Programs . . ." and also in the section titled "Special Electives Related to Language Arts." The Bibliography includes valuable references for curriculum planning.

Secondary schools should observe that in any kind of language arts program for grades seven through twelve, the following are required:

1. Twelve semesters of language arts during six years.
2. Two semesters of language arts per year (unless unusual circumstances cause a local school system to modify this requirement).
3. At least one semester of the twelve with major emphasis on developmental reading based on selections from American writers (any grade, 7-12).
4. At least one semester of the twelve with major emphasis on oral language (any grade, 7-12).
5. At least one semester of the twelve with major emphasis on writing (any grade, 7-12).

The State Department of Education will serve as a clearinghouse for receiving and distributing curriculum guides developed in local systems and for providing information on other available materials. School systems which develop guides are invited to submit copies to the State Department for reprinting and general use over the state.

Any school system needing advice, assistance, and materials for implementing this Course of Study should apply to the language arts specialists in the State Department of Education, Montgomery.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR LISTENING

No generation since the invention of the printing press has so consistently relied upon the power of the spoken word for mass communication as the present generation. Listening has always been an important factor in living, but never more important than today.

An awakening has taken place in listening as distinguished from mere hearing. Until recently, little attention was given to improving listening ability of children and youth, the assumption being that they already knew how to listen or would acquire this ability naturally. Now teachers realize that teaching pupils to listen effectively in the modern world is a formidable task.

Listening is the most used of the language skills. Teachers should try to provide a good listening climate and a planned program of listening. The program should include four basic types of listening: attentive, appreciative, analytical, and marginal.

In attentive listening, most distractions are eliminated; and the attention of the listener is focused on one person or one form of communication, such as a radio broadcast, a play, a television show, a recording, a lecture, or a telephone conversation.

Appreciative listening is listening for enjoyment. It is used for music, stories or poems read aloud, plays, and other entertainments. Analytical listening is more than attentive listening because the listener is expected to respond in a thoughtful way. He may listen to solve arithmetic problems, to discuss specific points in reading, or to master directions.

In marginal listening, one or more distractions are present. For example, students listen to the radio while doing their homework. Uses of marginal listening in the classroom might include music as a background for creative writing, music to accompany painting, or work in small groups of students with each group engaged in a different activity.

A good listening program is coordinated throughout the curriculum and is not limited to language arts exercises. The techniques of listening are just as vital to science, mathematics, social studies, art, and other disciplines. Through listening the student may learn a mathematical formula, rules for a game, or instructions for filling out a form.

Much of a student's success in every subject depends on his ability to listen competently. He listens to teachers and peers as information is given and questions are raised. He may use the formula T.L.Q.R.--tune in, listen, question, review. He employs not only physical processes of hearing but also mental processes of comprehending, listening beyond the words (inferring), understanding relationships (cause and effect), noting logical order, becoming personally and emotionally involved (creative listening), and realizing new relationships.

The section on study skills in each subject area of the Course of Study will have additional ideas about listening.

The following list of skills and techniques of listening should help teachers to design good listening programs. Teachers may introduce a skill at the time suggested or earlier or later, depending on each student's readiness. Once introduced, the skill should be reinforced and refined in later grades.

A Student's Skills and Techniques of Listening

	Approximate Beginning
Develops good attitudes toward listening	
Looks at speaker	K-2
Plays simple partner games	K-2
Is courteous when others speak	1-3
Concentrates five minutes on speaker	3-4
Uses buddy system for reading paragraphs	3-4
Adjusts to distractions	5-6
Verbalizes good listening standards	5-6
Increases interest span to ten-fifteen minutes	5-6
Sits farther from speaker but still listens attentively	5-6
Improves listening as a study skill	7-8
Listens attentively even though disagreeing with speaker	7-9
Recognizes importance of being a good listener	7-9
Develops understanding of cultural differences in speech	7-10
Develops an awareness of listening processes	7-10
Develops personal responsibility as a listener	10-12
Recognizes similarities and differences in word sounds, also in new words	
Recognizes words with common beginnings and endings	K-2
Listens for rhyming sounds	K-2
Plays simple games involving sounds	K-2
Listens for root and word forms	3-4
Hears differences in breathed and breathless beginnings	3-4
Plays games with antonyms, homonyms, synonyms	3-4
Becomes aware of accenting	4-6
Hears color and mood words	5-6
Recognizes dialectic differences	5-6
Realizes different patterns of speech appropriate in different situations	7-9
Strives for articulatory discrimination	10-12
Hears rhythm, intonation, mood effects, changes in key	
Recognizes loud-soft, fast-slow, lively-quiet, staccato-sustained in music	K-2
Follows music in games	K-2
Follows clapped or beaten rhythms	K-2
Follows detailed rhythmic patterns	3-4
Repeats up to four measures of melody	3-4
Recognizes orchestra selections	3-4
Describes what music has to say	3-4
Listens to three-minute recordings	3-4
Recognizes musical instruments	4-6
Participates in part singing	4-6

Develops taste in record selection	5-6
Listens to longer and more complex music	7-12
Remembers details and finds differences	
Gives back details from a simple story	K-2
Repeats three or four numbers or letters	K-2
Picks out word that does not belong in a sequence	K-2
Plays game of words that distort ideas	K-2
Responds directly with the reverse word	3-4
Adds adjectives and adverbs	3-4
Hears stopping points in paragraphs	3-4
Puts series in sequential order	4-6
Finds poorly constructed sentences and non-sequential arrangement of ideas	5-6
Isolates phrases that answer questions	5-6
Separates relevant from irrelevant ideas	7-10
Discriminates between synonyms	10-12
Uses appropriate sentence transforms	10-12
Listens for main ideas	
Tells what story is about	K-2
Names main characters	K-2
Listens to small-group discussion and reports main ideas	2-4
Selects main ideas from speaking record	2-4
Picks out action words	3-4
Gives simple outline of content	4-6
Recognizes complex organization of speech or report	7-12
Follows directions	
Plays games with simple directions	K-2
Follows two-step direction for physical activity	K-2
Can think a simple direction	K-2
Does one-step mental mathematics problems	3-4
Repeats assignments given orally	3-4
Does creative work from listening to directions	3-4
Follows four-step direction with physical movement	4-6
Follows directions for advanced processes and assignments	7-12
Gains information	
Acquires facts to find answers	K-2
Knows names of classmates and teacher	K-2
Makes identifications	K-2
Listens to stories on tapes and records	K-2
Plays games from information transfer	K-2
Gathers facts on field trip	2-6
Proceeds after question is answered	3-4
Conducts simple interview	4-6

Recognizes main ideas in panel discussion or debate	6-9
Takes notes on interview or speech	10-12
Conducts opinion poll	10-12
Increases vocabulary and improves choice of words	
Repeats new words	K-2
Uses colorful words with expression	K-2
Plays with a word after nearing it	K-2
Puts together words that sound well	K-2
Learns a new word a day	K-2
Plays games in which meaning is predicted from sound	3-4
Substitutes big word for smaller word	3-4
Gets meaning from context	3-4
Selects effective adjective-noun combinations	4-6
Hears new words on radio and television	4-6
Listens for figures of speech	4-6
Uses a dictionary or thesaurus to investigate words	7-10
Creates fresh comparisons	10-12
Chooses strong verbs and specific nouns	10-12
Searches for the one right word	11-12
Enjoys speech, music, and creative noises	
Is curious to hear different kinds of sounds	K-2
Likes to be read to	K-2
Hears many sounds on a walk	K-2
Enjoys picture music	2-4
Pantomimes feelings of story characters	2-4
Is sensitive to nature sounds	2-4
Uses sound effects in storytelling	4-6
Refines perception through sensory experiences	7-12
Seeks opportunities for listening experiences that are personally appealing	7-12
Listens creatively for total sensory involvement	10-12
Acquires critical and evaluative listening skills	
Expresses like or dislike of a story	K-2
Demonstrates choice of what is listened to	K-2
Knows when something is left out	2-4
Listens to own voice	2-4
Evaluates reports	3-4
Evaluates speech for rhythm, speed, and intonation	4-6
Identifies dialects of others	7-9
Identifies own prejudices	9-12
Evaluates speeches by predetermined criteria	9-12
Detects and identifies various kinds of propaganda	9-12
Recognizes the need for analytical listening	10-12

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR SPEAKING

The spoken word is vital in our world of today and tomorrow.

> Speaking is a learned expressive skill. (It is used) to express feelings, convey thought, or influence behavior . . . For every individual, child or adult, slow or bright, rich or poor, vocationally skilled or unskilled, the ability to listen and to speak effectively is probably the most important asset that he can acquire and maintain throughout a lifetime.[1]

Certainly one of the responsibilities of Alabama schools is to teach children and youth to speak effectively.

From the beginning, inviting classrooms and friendly people should help a boy or girl develop a good self-concept. The teacher should provide such stimulating experiences--real and vicarious--that the student is eager to talk about them. The student should find that the teacher and classmates are willing to listen to him and that he should be willing to listen to them.

Desks arranged so that students can face each other facilitate speech development. When there is group planning or group discussion, students soon learn to react to nonverbal cues as well as verbal cues.

Small groups with students working together to plan and carry out projects provide means of communicating thoughts and feelings.

Classrooms arranged with various centers of interest stimulate oral language development. They provide ideas which students want to share.

A speech program should offer students training in development and organization of ideas, correct usage and enunciation of words, functional grammar, and effective delivery. The program should include

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[1]Children and Oral Language, A Joint Committee of the ACEI, ASCD, IRA, and NCTE, p. 3, 1964.

readiness activities, skill development, and abundant opportunities for students to communicate with one another. Ideally, it should include enjoyable experiences with the arts, field trips, excursions, and resource people so that students will have much to talk about.

The teacher's enthusiasm, interest, and concern for students and their growth are elements essential to a successful program in language arts. As James A. Smith says,

> "The development of the skill of communication is the greatest adventure in Man's life. Without it he cannot reason, make known his ideas or absorb the ideas of others. Without it he cannot develop understanding, create empathy, project sympathy, acquire knowledge nor express himself to the Universe."[1]

Every language arts teacher should be a skillful teacher of speech. He himself should be a model of attentive listening and effective speaking. The teacher should be especially aware of the exceptional child. He should recognize abnormality of hearing and speech. He should then either provide assistance himself or arrange it through referral to counselors, therapists, or community agencies. The teacher should also note gifted and performance-minded students, for whom he should try to create programs in debate, forensics, and drama.

Not only language arts teachers but also teachers of all other subjects should plan speech experiences. When a student has an opportunity to talk about a subject he is studying, he is learning the new knowledge. If he can orally express new information in his own fashion, he has comprehended it. After a student has read textbooks and other materials on a certain subject, he should be given time to retell, discuss, or debate the subject. Thus each student rethinks what he has taken in and expresses it in his own way.

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[1]Smith, James A., Adventures in Communication: Language Arts Methods. Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

The section on study skills in each content area of the Course of Study presents other ideas on speaking.

The following list of skills and techniques of speaking should help teachers to plan speech programs. Students will, of course, vary widely in their time of readiness and their degree of mastery.

A Student's Skills and Techniques of Speaking

Kindergarten

- Uses conventional (regional) pronunciation
- Develops self-control, taking turns in talking and listening to others
- Expresses ideas in complete sentences
- Takes part in playmaking and choral speaking

First Grade

- Develops increased confidence in speaking to class
- Begins to share ideas and to consider the viewpoints of others
- Contributes to discussion, though often introducing irrelevant ideas
- Begins to retell a story with events in proper order
- Speaks in a clear, distinct voice
- Develops a larger vocabulary and shows awareness of language patterns
- Interprets experiences through playmaking and puppetry
- Reads poetry aloud in group (choral reading) or in individual recitation

Second Grade

- Participates spontaneously in speaking situations
- Shares ideas and considers the viewpoints of others
- Contributes to group discussion, usually keeping to topic and asking relevant questions
- Begins to organize and present ideas chronologically
- Uses language patterns acceptable to peers
- Willingly shares thoughts and imaginative and real experiences with class
- Participates in playmaking and oral games
- Improves articulation and enunciation
- Shows awareness of appropriateness of usage
- Begins control of voice volume, pitch, and tone
- Takes turns listening and speaking

Third Grade

Uses conventional (regional) pronunciation with greater fluency
Continues to develop acceptable manners of conversing--taking turns talking and listening to others
Shares thoughts and experiences, both real and imaginative, with class
Becomes aware of own voice and platform habits
Begins to recognize reasons for change in pitch, stress, and pause
Increases vocabulary through descriptive and action words
Participates in choral speaking, panel and group discussions, and planning sessions
Uses creative dramatics and puppetry for developing imagination and interpreting experiences
Speaks spontaneously and easily with others
Begins to question as a way of learning
Improves articulation and enunciation
Develops increasing confidence in value of own ideas and ability to express them to individuals or group
Begins to offer relevant observations and to ask relevant questions
Learns to avoid repetition of points already made and to direct questions and comments to speakers other than teacher
Grows in ability to offer imaginative and original, but not always workable, solutions to problems
Begins to show ability in organizing ideas for reporting: develops sequence; keeps to the topic; composes an original story with plot and conversation
Begins to develop characterization; identifies through voice and action with character
Notes and discusses varieties of language usage

Fourth Grade

Strives to enunciate clearly and to pronounce correctly
Demonstrates ability to change meaning by changing inflection and tone of voice
Develops ability to speak with notes or outlines
Tells a story in chronological order
Acquires some poise in expressing his own ideas, and respects ideas of others
Begins to select topics for conversation and discussion which are of interest to others as well as to self; begins to recognize authority for statements made
Grows in ability to organize ideas for presentation (stories, reports, etc.) and to create recognizable structure (beginning, middle, and end)
Participates in choral speaking and in informal drama; enjoys sharing these creative activities with other classes and other groups
Discusses differences of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical form after hearing speakers or recordings from other geographical regions

Fifth Grade

Interprets character and reads both prose and poetry effectively
Participates in discussion in a give-and-take manner
Participates in panels, dramatizations, and choral readings
Develops fluency in speaking and poise in presentation
Enunciates clearly distinguishable phonemes; projects and modulates appropriately
Engages in informal exchange of ideas with others, and consults with others in formulating plans
Grows more at ease in the speaking situation; disagrees, if necessary, with courtesy; directs comments and questions to classmates as well as teacher
Develops understanding of relationship of speaker, audience, occasion, time, and place of utterance to appropriateness of language

Sixth Grade

Expresses increasingly complex ideas
Exhibits positive attitudes toward speaking and listening
Recognizes and accepts variations in conventional (regional) patterns of speaking
Discusses usage for formal and informal language situations
Becomes more discriminating and less self-centered in the selection of topics of conversation and discussion; learns to question courteously the statements of others
Tells original stories effectively
Becomes more proficient in creating informal drama with material derived from social studies, literature, newspaper stories, and other sources
Continues to demonstrate courtesy in the speaking situation

Seventh Grade

Learns the basic elements of social conversation
- Developing sensitivity as an individual speaker to the listener
- Expressing ideas and responding to ideas in pairs and small groups (with prearranged subject)

Participates in speech-improvement activities
- Improving articulation, enunciation, and pronunciation through choral speaking and specific exercises which stress articulatory discrimination (seeing and hearing the same sound)
- Emphasizing the need for different spoken languages for different occasions, such as home language and school language

Learns simple parliamentary procedures
- Demonstrating ability to participate in a meeting effectively
- Demonstrating ability to conduct a meeting

Participates in simple improvisations
- Involving group discussions and decisions
- Including verbal and nonverbal presentations

Participates in group discussions
- Learning problem-solving techniques
- Learning to tolerate ideas of others
- Learning to suspend judgment and to change opinion in light of new evidence

Distinguishes between standard and nonstandard dialects
- Listening to examples and discussing them
- Noting environmental influences
- Expressing interest in and appreciation of dialectal patterns and forms
- Observing that speakers may expand language to include other dialects

Eighth Grade

Uses techniques for gaining confidence in speaking situations
- Preparing material adequately before delivery
- Eliminating fear by speaking often
- Using natural gestures

Continues practice in speech improvement
- Using the tape recorder to record voices
- Using formal exercises to develop clear speech
- Varying usage according to subject, audience, occasion, time, and place

Participates in group discussions
- Using thought-developing processes to solve problems
- Distinguishing between fact and opinion
- Using informal debate techniques to evolve ideas

Participates in informal drama
- Involving analysis of characters and events
- Organizing ideas for expression
- Attempting other dialects

Ninth Grade

Continues speech improvement activities
- Using the tape recorder to analyze students' voices and diction

Prepares and delivers informal speeches
- Introducing someone
- Accepting a gift or an award
- Making announcements
- Sharing ideas from readings

Engages in informal debate
- Emphasizing difference between fact and opinion

Prepares and delivers formal talks
- Learning how to gather and organize information
- Learning how to persuade an audience
- Learning how to entertain an audience
- Learning to use audiovisual aids while speaking

Participates in Readers' Theatre
- Analyzing characters and situations from literature
- Presenting interpretations to the class

Tenth Grade

Continues individual speech improvement
- Reviewing functional grammar
- Practicing appropriate usage

Evaluates television programs
- Giving oral analyses of programs
- Distinguishing various program categories, such as dramas, situation comedies, documentaries, and news broadcasts
- Distinguishing between fact and opinion

Participates in group discussions
- Using world events and issues as topics
- Emphasizing organization and presentation of ideas
- Expressing personal feelings, beginning with phrases like "In my opinion," "I think," and "It seems to me"
- Using democratic procedures

Participates in oral interpretations of literature
- Reading poetry aloud individually or in chorus
- Using Readers' Theatre techniques
- Presenting book reports in a unique way

Participates in drama activities
- Improvising scenes from literature
- Improvising original scenes
- Using appropriate language for character, time, and place

Eleventh Grade

Continues individual speech improvement
- Developing guidelines for appropriate usage

Refines group discussion techniques
- Developing individual and group analysis of a topic under discussion
- Using topics related to the student's other classes
- Developing skills in reasoning and critical thinking

Practices formal speaking
- Learning patterns of organizing information
- Developing skills for effective oral delivery
- Developing standards for appropriate usage of vocabulary and grammar
- Using visual aids
- Using a microphone

Twelfth Grade

Continues individual speech improvement
- Evaluating own speech habits and the speech of others
- Studying levels of usage heard on the school campus and elsewhere in the community
- Recognizing the value of appropriate oral language in all careers
- Checking own speech by means of dictionaries, a thesaurus, and other references

Learns the origin and use of a variety of speech patterns
- Becoming aware of nuances of language
- Recognizing speech patterns existing in the locale
- Becoming aware of the range from informality to formality, standard to nonstandard
- Becoming aware of the use and abuse of language

Participates in a variety of oral activities, such as group discussions, debating, panel discussions, symposiums, improvisations, role playing, choral speaking, and oral interpretation

Chooses the word and the sentence most appropriate to the oral context and purpose

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS IN READING

Reading is an integral aspect of the total process of communication. For its optimum development and eventual maturity, it must depend on listening, speaking, and writing, and they, too, must often rely heavily on reading as a strong receptive resource. More specifically, however, each skill must be defined in its own right. For this State guide we draw from several definitions and conclude that reading is a complex process of skill development which involves responding appropriately to printed symbols, perceiving, comprehending, reacting, and integrating the ideas into one's own experiences. If the learner masters these reading skills in the sequence presented in the elementary school years, he will reinforce and refine these skills in his secondary school years instead of mastering new ones. This concept of reading is at the foundation of its developmental nature and constitutes a rationale for the sequential presentations which follow.

In the sequence charts of reading skills for kindergarten through grade twelve presented in this State guide, the first time an x appears indicates the level at which the skill is first introduced. Subsequent x's for the same skill indicate the approximate level at which the skill is reviewed, reinforced, or refined.

The scope of the reading program encompasses more than a sequence of skills. The scope of the program also includes relating reading to literature and the other content areas, enhancing personal or voluntary reading, and providing special instruction for those students who are not reading at levels commensurate with their abilities. Therefore, following the sequence charts in this State guide, there are sections

on reading in literature, reading in other content areas, and providing special labs for corrective reading.

A Student's Sequential Development of Reading Skills

Primary Levels

	Kindergarten	1	2	3
Word perception and vocabulary				
Uses contextual clues for word recognition and meaning				
Infers unknown words from picture clues	x	x		
Uses synonym and antonym clues to get the meaning of unfamiliar words		x	x	x
Uses intention of context to understand specific meaning of words of multiple meaning			x	x
Uses phonetic analysis for association of sounds with consonants and vowels				
Develops auditory and visual perception of beginning, middle, and ending consonants	x	x	x	x
Learns names of vowels		x	x	
Learns sounds of initial consonant blends		x	x	
Begins to apply phonic rules		x	x	
Uses knowledge of phonic elements to sound out syllables			x	x
Uses structural analysis in identifying meaning units in words				
Notes s, ed, and ing endings	x	x	x	x
Notes other endings such as ly, est, es			x	x
Recognizes compound words		x	x	x
Recognizes root or base words			x	x
Identifies word endings			x	x
Uses syllabication rules				x

	Kindergarten	1	2	3
Develops sight vocabulary				
Associates spoken words with printed words	x	x		
Matches pictures with words	x	x	x	
Recognizes words with both upper and lower case letters at beginning		x	x	x
Recognizes 220 Dolch Basic Sight Words (by the end of the year)			x	
Uses dictionary skills				
Uses picture dictionary		x	x	
Knows alphabetical order			x	x
Uses beginning dictionary				x
Differentiates likenesses and differences among visual forms				
Distinguishes colors, sizes, shapes, letters, numbers, pictures	x	x		
Recognizes likenesses and differences in words and letters	x	x		
Notes likenesses and differences between sounds				
Hears rhyming elements in words	x	x	x	x
Recognizes sounds at the beginning and ending of words	x	x	x	x
Follows left-to-right sequence	x	x	x	x
Comprehension				
Shows interest in books and in learning to read	x	x		
Develops listening skills	x	x		
Increases vocabulary through listening	x	x		
Finds main ideas in pictures	x	x		
Interprets pictures critically	x	x		
Anticipates outcomes from stories read aloud	x	x		
Uses simple punctuation as a guide to meaning (i.e., period, exclamation mark, question mark, comma)		x	x	x
Keeps events in proper sequence		x	x	x
Recalls what has been read orally and silently		x	x	x

	Kindergarten	1	2	3
Develops additional skills in using meaningful punctuation through oral reading (i.e., semicolon, colon, various uses of the comma, dash)				x
Develops skills in getting the meaning of short phrases			x	x
Finds main ideas in sentences, short paragraphs		x	x	x
Remembers where to find answers to questions		x	x	x
Develops ability to arrive at generalizations and come to conclusions from given facts		x	x	x
Associates ideas in material read to draw conclusions			x	x
Follows printed directions		x	x	x
Improves ability to predict outcomes from material read			x	x
Follows plot sequence			x	x
Uses table of contents to locate information			x	x
Groups words through classification			x	x
Finds main idea in a story			x	x
Reads for sequence of events				x
Sees relationships and draws logical conclusions				x
Reads for a specific purpose: for pleasure, to find answer questions, etc.				x
Oral reading skills				
Remembers short sentences (five words)	x			
Makes up simple endings for stories	x	x		
Pronounces words correctly	x	x		
Reads with correct phrasing which shows that he knows the meaning not only of words but of the entire selection		x		
Reads with appropriate tone, pitch, force, and speed to give meaning		x		
Displays good posture and handles book effectively		x		
Understands the use of the period, comma, question mark, and exclamation mark		x	x	x
Reads clearly and distinctly			x	
Reads with expression			x	
Reads fluently			x	
Reads so that listeners enjoy story				x
Reads with a pleasing voice quality				x
Reads with adequate volume				x
Reads with clear and distinct enunciation				x
Uses accuracy in pronunciation				x
Displays ability to convey meaning to listeners				x

	Kindergarten	1	2	3
Work-Study skills				
Follows simple directions	x	x		
Demonstrates elementary work habits				
Shows independence in work	x	x		
Accepts responsibility for completion and quality of work	x	x		
Shows development of eye and hand motor coordination	x	x		
Follows oral directions given to a group		x	x	x
Follows oral directions given individually		x	x	x
Follows written directions		x	x	x
Recognizes organization of ideas in sequential order		x	x	x
Begins to make judgments and draw conclusions		x	x	x
Uses table of contents			x	
Uses picture dictionary to find new words			x	x
Groups words by initial letters			x	x
Explores the library as a research center for resources that are appropriate for completing an assigned task			x	x
Shows increasing independence in work by following directions and using table of contents			x	x
Begins to read maps			x	x
Begins to use index of books				x
Reads simple maps and graphs				x
Realizes printed statements may be either fact or opinion				x
Uses beginning outlining skills				x
Remembers and follows a series of directions in sequence				x
Generalizes from directions for one task to a similar task				x
Reading interests and appreciation				
Enjoys discussion of books		x	x	x
Laughs or smiles to himself as he reads a humorous book		x	x	x
Voluntarily resumes reading a book he has chosen as soon as his other work is completed		x	x	x
Uses school and public library for recreational and study reading			x	x
Reads many worthwhile books		x	x	x
Increases his awareness of and finds personal value in reading				x
Appraises quality of book, magazine, television show, movie				x

	Kindergarten	1	2	3
Enjoys author's style in prose and poetry--picture-forming words, rhythm, or cadence		x	x	x
Illustrates stories read			x	x
Dramatizes stories read			x	x
Owns several books which he particularly likes				x

Intermediate Levels

	4	5	6
Word perception and vocabulary			
Learns new words in content fields	x	x	x
Recognizes similarities in known words			
Compound words	x	x	x
Root words	x	x	x
Suffixes, prefixes	x	x	x
Plurals	x	x	x
Hyphenated words	x	x	x
Contractions	x	x	x
Develops ability in getting meaning from context	x	x	x
Interprets word meanings	x	x	x
Achieves skill in differentiating homonyms, synonyms, antonyms, heteronyms		x	x
Learns abstract meanings of words		x	x
Learns to use and understand the simpler types of figurative language, such as simile, personification, and less-obscure metaphor		x	x
Learns to appreciate colloquialisms in reading materials		x	x
Identifies and appreciates imagery			x
Learns to distinguish formal and informal language			x
Reviews and masters basic sight words	x		
Knows rules of syllabication			
Knows each syllable must contain a vowel or vowel sound and that a single vowel can be a syllable	x	x	x
Knows suffixes and prefixes are syllables with meanings of their own	x	x	x
Knows the root word is not divided	x	x	x
Knows that if the first vowel is followed by two consonants the first syllable usually ends with the first consonant	x	x	
Knows that if a word ends in "le" preceded by a consonant, that consonant begins the last syllable	x	x	x
Knows that the letter "x" always goes with the preceding vowel to form a syllable	x	x	x
Knows that the letters "ck" go with the preceding vowel and end the syllable	x	x	x
Knows that when there is an "r" after a vowel the "r" goes with the vowel to make the "er" sound	x	x	x
Learns additional prefixes and suffixes	x	x	x
Reviews phonic skills learned earlier: single consonants and blends, short and long vowels, vowel teams such as "ee," "au," "ay," and "ou"	x	x	x

	4	5	6
Reviews vowel rules or generalizations as the need arises	x	x	x
Reviews dictionary skills learned earlier	x		
Arranges words alphabetically with ease and rapidity	x		
Learns the division of the dictionary to determine where one-third or one-fourth of the words may be found	x		
Learns meaning and use of phonetic spellings	x	x	x
Learns use and meaning of pronunciation key at bottom of page		x	x
Learns to balance use of context and consultation of the dictionary		x	x
Learns to make use of guide words	x	x	x
Learns the meaning and use of secondary accent		x	x
Comprehension			
Learns to find the main idea by choosing titles for materials read			x
Learns to summarize			x
Learns to identify key words and topic sentences	x	x	x
Learns to find details by selecting facts to remember	x	x	x
Learns to select facts to support main ideas	x	x	x
Learns to arrange ideas in sequence	x	x	x
Knows the rules of punctuation in comprehension	x	x	x
Learns to interpret italics	x	x	x
Learns to give meaning to quotation marks	x	x	x
Learns to check parentheses for further meaning	x	x	x
Appreciates the significance of exclamation marks	x	x	x
Work-Study skills			
Learns skills in outlining by notetaking			x
Learns sequencing of ideas or events			x
Identifies main ideas of clearly written paragraph			x
Locates specific information by skimming			x
Learns use of study guides	x	x	x
Uses correctly maps, charts, graphs, illustrations	x	x	x
Learns outlining of simple ideas from material read	x	x	x
Appreciation			
Interprets story ideas	x	x	x
Discovers relationships		x	x
Identifies mood of a selection			x
Identifies the author's purpose			x
Identifies character traits and interprets character's feelings			x
Interprets descriptive words and phrases	x	x	x

Appreciation and enjoyment of reading which literature fosters are just as important as mastering reading skills which this Course of Study is emphasizing. The fact that more space is not allocated to literature does not mean that it is of lesser value in the total reading program. Children are exposed to literature read to them before they learn the skill of reading for themselves. This generates interest in reading which is a strong motivational factor in helping them master the decoding process. As soon as children learn to read the symbols of writing, they are encouraged to use these skills for enjoyment in reading literature beyond that found in the basal program material. Literature as a motivating force and as a reinforcing factor in learning to read cannot be overemphasized.

Junior High or Middle School Levels

	7	8	9
Word perception and vocabulary			
Demonstrates ability to handle phonetic elements such as			
Variant vowel sounds	x	x	x
Consonant sounds	x	x	
Blends	x	x	
Shows maturity of structural analysis through			
Base words	x	x	
Prefixes	x	x	x
Suffixes	x	x	x
Compound words	x		
Accents and syllabication	x		
Demonstrates accuracy in determining specific word meaning through context, modification of prefixes and suffixes, interpretation from base, use of dictionary, clarification of word origin, study of synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms of increasing difficulty	x	x	x
Comprehension in silent and oral reading			
Recognizes the author's ideas stated or implied in sentences or paragraphs	x	x	x
Recognizes the significance of a group of paragraphs in supplying answers to questions		x	x
Gets information from books or magazines as the basis of a report		x	x
Recognizes several points of view		x	x
Maintains power of reasoning	x	x	x
Identifies plot and draws conclusions	x		
Draws conclusions from a set of different situations	x	x	x
Notes significance of physical movements, such as eye movement, lip movement, head movement, and finger pointing	x	x	x
Reads for the purpose of applying information to a practical situation		x	x
Skims for fact finding	x	x	x
Reads for retention and evaluation	x	x	x
Reads to improve rate	x	x	x
Reads for enjoyment	x	x	x
Work-Study skills			
Uses more advanced library skills such as			
Card catalogue		x	x
Classification		x	x
Care of books	x		

	7	8	9
Handles periodicals or sources of information with respect to the			
Author	x	x	x
Introduction	x	x	x
Table of contents	x	x	x
Index	x	x	x
Glossary	x	x	x
Title page	x	x	x
Copyright		x	x
Date of publication		x	x
Footnotes		x	x
Tables		x	x
Demonstrates the ability to use			
Pictures	x	x	x
Charts	x	x	x
Applies different rates to varied materials		x	x
Appreciation			
Reads to enjoy and appreciate			
Plays	x	x	x
Novels	x	x	x
Magazines	x	x	x
Poetry	x	x	x
Author's views	x	x	x
Newspaper	x	x	x
Television programs	x	x	x
Textbooks	x	x	x

Senior High Levels

	10	11	12
Word perception and vocabulary			
Improves word-analysis skills: structural and phonetic	x		
Increases skill in handling prefixes, suffixes, and roots with help from Greek and Latin derivatives	x	x	
Uses senior and collegiate dictionaries with ease and discrimination	x	x	x
Expands both general and technical vocabularies	x	x	x
Studies overtones of words and semantic derivations	x	x	x
Recognizes persuasive words and is aware of their possible influences	x	x	x
Comprehension			
Reads purposefully	x	x	x
Notes details	x		
Gets the general meaning or significance of materials of increasing difficulty	x	x	x
Selects main ideas with accuracy and discrimination	x	x	
Follows a sequence of ideas or events	x		
Gets organizational idea of an article or chapter and relates details to it	x	x	x
Follows directions with accuracy and ease	x		
Predicts outcomes from clues and inferences in increasingly difficult materials	x	x	
Achieves efficiency and versatility in rates of reading for various purposes	x	x	x
Writes in one's own words a good outline or summary of the selection read	x	x	x
Remembers in organized form as much as is important for further thinking	x	x	x
Reads aloud with effectiveness and personal satisfaction	x	x	x
Relates own experiences to what the author has stated	x	x	x
Selects the meaning that conforms to the reader's purpose at the moment	x	x	x
Distinguishes between fact and opinion	x		
Obtains both literal and figurative meanings	x	x	
Reacts appropriately to mood, tone, and "message" of the selection	x	x	x
Draws inferences from increasingly involved plot or sequence	x	x	x
Synthesizes two or more meanings to compare new ideas or opinions	x	x	x

	10	11	12
Evaluates the author's point of view	x	x	x
Examines the author's statements for truth or discrepancies and recognized propaganda	x	x	x
Applies materials read in the solution of problems	x	x	x
Adjusts to the broad scope of forms of writing and of style		x	x
Finds reasons for events and actions in narrative and expository materials	x	x	x
Draws analogies based on reading	x	x	x
Work-Study skills			
Locates and selects material needed in books, reference materials, and subject indexes	x		
Masters some formula or strategy for effective study	x		
Skims skillfully for a variety of purposes: finding a certain fact; finding out what questions a passage will answer; getting clues to organization and plot	x	x	x
Reads maps, graphs, charts, diagrams with accuracy	x	x	x
Takes notes	x	x	x
Applies ideas gained from reading through discussion, entertainment, and practical application	x	x	x
Creates best conditions for efficient study	x		
Reading interests and appreciation			
Reads books other than regular texts	x	x	x
Reads a newspaper	x	x	x
Finds and expresses satisfaction in an author's style in prose, poetry, and other representations	x	x	x
Appraises quality of a publication		x	x
Reads as a favorite leisure-time activity	x	x	x
Widens scope and quality of reading	x	x	x
Engages in discussion of books, articles, and other types of readings	x	x	x
Uses television and other media to enhance reading	x	x	

Reading in Literature

While emphasis has been placed on a developmental sequence of reading skills, literature also comprises an essential part of the total reading program.

The quality and types of materials that a student reads are just as important as the skills he acquires while reading; therefore, to develop taste, a student must read authors who use the language most effectively and most artistically.

Realizing that students develop taste in literature gradually, C. Robert Carlsen, in Books and the Teen-Age Reader, identifies the following stages in the reading preferences of young people.

Students in early adolescence, in grades five through nine, prefer the following types of stories: animal stories; adventure stories; mystery stories; tales of the supernatural; sports stories; growing up around the world; home and family-life stories; broad, bold slapstick; and stories set in the past.

Students in middle adolescence, in grades nine and ten, prefer the following types of stories: nonfiction accounts of adventure; biography and autobiography; historical novels; mystical romances; and stories of adolescent life.

Students in late adolescence, in grades eleven and twelve, prefer books concerned with the following themes: the search for personal values; social significance; the strange and unusual human experience; and the transition into adult life.

As he matures in his reading abilities, the student will learn to grasp an overall picture of character, setting, plot, and action; he will

learn to distinguish essential from nonessential settings and flat characters from round characters. He will learn to appreciate the author's style of description and follow the sequence of plot development. He will learn to draw inferences, visualize while reading, project himself into a scene, and read critically and evaluatively. Finally, as the student develops proficiency in his reading skills and mature taste in his selection of books, he will make reading for pleasure and information an essential part of his daily life.

In providing literature for his students, a teacher is guided in his selections by student interests and student needs, recalling the words of Samuel Johnson: "A man ought to read just as inclination leads him; for what he reads as a task will do him little good."

In selecting literature, whether the classics or popular and adolescent novels, a teacher is guided by prepared booklists in addition to student interest. Two of the excellent booklists prepared by the National Council of Teachers of English are High-Interest, Easy-Reading and Books for You.

After the teacher and his students have selected the literature to be read, reports on this literature should include panel discussions, improvisations, and other experiences that will stimulate reading.

In selecting books, paperbacks, newspapers, magazines and other types of media, the teacher should correlate the social studies and language arts programs by providing literature which emphasizes the following:

seventh grade--self-understanding and self-development in a changing world;

eighth grade--the student's present and future citizenship based on his national and state heritage;

ninth grade--career exploration, ecology, law, minority studies, home and family, and the humanities;

tenth grade--other cultures within the student's own land, other lands, and literature from the past and present;

eleventh grade--selections from American writers;

twelfth grade--human issues and values, literature past and present, and various types of media.

An excellent resource to use in correlating the social studies and language arts programs is Reading Ladders for Human Relations, also published by the National Council of Teachers of English.

Always, whether teaching basic reading skills or literature, the teacher should consider his most important responsibilities those of encouraging students to read widely and providing reading materials that will capture their interest and make them avid, discriminating readers.

Special Reading Labs

The protean demands of a dynamic society are challenging the institution of public education to provide quality learning experiences for a wide variety of students in increasing numbers. Many of these students are deficient enough in their reading skills to require corrective reading instruction; these students should be taught in a reading lab situation in which diagnostic-prescriptive methods of teaching are used.

Information on establishing a reading lab is available from the State Department of Education.

Teaching Reading in the Content Areas

In any content area, the first task of the teacher is to determine the approximate instructional reading levels of his students and then match these students with materials written on their levels.

There are many inexpensive inventories, both formal and informal, that classroom teachers can use to determine the instructional reading levels of their students. One emergency method that teachers can use to determine whether or not a selection is too difficult for a student to read is to have him hold up one finger each time he reads a word in a passage that he does not know and cannot understand from the context. When the student is holding up five fingers, he has reached his frustrational reading level.

After a teacher determines a student's instructional reading level, by formal or informal methods, he must match the student with materials that he can read. There are many formulas available to determine the readability level of printed material. One widely used method of determining this level includes the use of Fry's graph.

After a teacher matches the reading level of the student with the readability level of the material, he can use the following design to teach a short reading selection effectively:

a. Establish the purpose for reading the selection;
b. Discuss the general subject of the selection and relate it to the students' experiential background if possible;
c. Discuss the major concepts developed in the selection;
d. Study technical or other vocabulary words in the selection that students probably will not know;
e. Preview the selection by reading the title, noting illustrations if there are any, and skimming each paragraph in the selection;
f. Reading the selection carefully and evaluate it in some way.

This design can be applied to any content area at varying grade levels or phase levels of difficulty.

The next section of this guide presents some specific types of reading and study skills that are needed in all areas.

Reading Skills

Comprehension skills include the following:

a. Uses word-analysis skills and context clues in understanding vocabulary;
b. Recognizes important details;
c. Identifies the main ideas in sentences, paragraphs, and longer selections;
d. Develops a purpose for reading.

Growing out of these comprehension skills are the following skills in creative and critical reading:

a. Recognizes opinions as such and forms judgments as to accuracy and relevancy of content;
b. Recognizes the significance of the content;
c. Realizes the author's purpose in writing.

Study Skills

The study skills that are needed in all content areas are the following:

a. Demonstrates the ability to take notes from a book or lecture, outlines, and summarizes material;
b. Demonstrates the ability to locate information in a book through the use of the table of contents, index, and glossary;
c. Demonstrates the ability to locate information in a library through the use of card catalogues, reference works, periodical indexes, and other aids;
d. Demonstrates the ability to use graphic aids, such as illustrations, graphs, tables, charts, maps, diagrams, and cartoons.

These reading and study skills can be adopted for use by teachers in any of the content areas.

The specific reading skills needed in language arts are identified by Ruth G. Viox in Evaluating Reading and Study Skills in the Secondary

Classroom. Viox divides the skills into two areas: basic reading skills and skills needed in reading literature. She does not differentiate between reading and study skills as an earlier portion of this section, Reading in the Content Areas, has done. Viox identifies the following basic skills:

a. Uses word-attack and word-analysis skills;
b. Uses context clues;
c. Understands word derivations and word origins;
d. Uses the dictionary and other reference aids;
e. Distinguishes between main ideas and related details;
f. Reads critically;
g. Follows a sequence;
h. Organizes ideas into an outline;
i. Demonstrates ability to summarize;
j. Takes notes from a book or lecture;
k. Recalls a pattern used in a selection;
l. Reads aloud well;
m. Adjusts reading rate to difficulty of material and purpose for reading;
n. Skims and scans efficiently.

Viox identifies the following skills as those needed in reading literature:

a. Skims an article before doing a thorough reading;
b. Attains an overall picture of setting, plot, and action;
c. Appreciates the author's style of description;
d. Observes punctuation;
e. Hears the music of words;
f. Visualizes;
g. Projects self into a scene;
h. Draws inferences;
i. Reads critically and evaluatively.

These reading skills identified by Viox are a composite and refinement of those skills listed in an earlier portion of this State guide.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR WRITING

Writing greatly extends human powers. It provides a mind-bank; a personal means of recording, storing, and recalling information and experiences for days or years. As an instrument of communication, it serves usefully in studies, in correspondence, and in all occupations. On the wings of books, periodicals, and scripts for broadcasting, it crosses chasms of time, space, and culture. A tool of human progress, it facilitates planning, organizing, directing, evaluating, clarifying, reforming, and idealizing.

Once a student sees how writing can extend his own powers, he wants to learn to write well.

Accordingly, the general goals of a school writing program are to help each student express his ideas and feelings clearly, develop his understanding and appreciation of other people's writing, and cultivate his creative talents.

A school should provide every student with rich experiences in listening, speaking, observing, working, playing, and viewing of media so that he will find many interesting subjects to write about. Out of any lively learning experience emerge possible subjects and purposes for writing. A teacher should help each student discover a subject and a specific purpose meaningful to the student himself.

The teacher has the responsibility of arranging each student's writing tasks in a manageable sequence, step by step, so that the student can succeed and progress. Preparation for writing should include not only generation of interest and purpose but also instruction in

one or more specific writing techniques--not too many at a time. During writing sessions the teacher should be ready to give assistance and encouragement.

Valuable instruction comes before and during the act of writing. Post-mortem examinations will not revive dead writing. Excessive red-penciling will depress any young writer and fatigue his teacher.

The teacher should spare himself and his students by emphasizing gains and by helping students to solve one kind of writing problem at a time.

Constructive follow-up of writing includes such activities as these: appreciative sharing of compositions, teacher-student conferences, class attention to a common problem, filing of each new composition in the student's cumulative folder so that he can see his progress, pairs of students working on revisions, display or publication of revised manuscripts, and preparation for the next writing.

In a well-planned writing program the student enjoys freedom to think for himself, but he also discovers the advantages of self-discipline. For his writing to be comprehensible and effective, he must practice conventions of form and principles of rhetoric. As soon as he sees the purpose of a particular skill, he should be given opportunity to master it. Through many experiences in reading and writing, the student learns complex skills of syntax, spelling, handwriting, organization of thought, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. Through many experiences of having his writing read and discussed by other people, he discovers how to make it informative or entertaining as well as clear, concise, and coherent.

Writing should be taught in social studies, science, and other content areas as well as in language arts classes. It should be an integral part of career education.

This section on Minimum Requirements for Writing is organized differently from preceding sections of the Alabama Course of Study. Separate entries have been made for the components of a writing program in Grades K-6: functional writing, spelling, handwriting, and creative writing. Another entry lists the requirements for a writing program in Grades 7-12.

A Student's Skills and Techniques of Functional Writing, K-6

	Introduced	Reinforced	Expanded
Expresses ideas orally through cooperative efforts of others	K	1	
Expresses ideas orally in simple sentences	1	2	3
Copies sentences	1	2	
Begins sentences with capitals	1	2-6	
Uses appropriate punctuation to end sentences	1	2-6	
Organizes parts of sentences in sequential order	2	3	4-6
Uses a variety of words to build sentences	2	3	4-6
Writes simple sentences	2	3	4-6
Proofreads his own work	2	3	4-6
Writes sentences in sequential order	3	4-6	
Writes sentences using connectives	3	4-6	
Writes a friendly letter	3	4-6	
Uses capitalization and punctuation	1	2-6	
Writes announcements, labels, and notices	3	4	5-6
Fills in simple school forms	3	4	5-6
Recognizes that the addition or omission of part of a sentence affects the clearness of an idea	4	5	6
Writes a paragraph containing sentences that are related	4	5	6
Writes a simple business letter	4	5	6
Studies and interprets the comma in written stories	4	5	6

	Introduced	Reinforced	Expanded
Writes sentences to compare and contrast ideas	5	6	
Uses quotation marks in sentences of conversation	5	6	
Develops a simple outline	5	6	
Understands that meanings of words will change because of context	5	6	
Writes brief stories of experiences (See Creative Writing section.)	5		6
Writes sentences that show cause-and-effect relationship	6		
Makes a simple bibliography	6		
Writes definitions of words as they appear in context	6		
Writes a paragraph with a topic sentence	6		
Takes brief notes	6		

Minimum Requirements for Spelling, K-6

Spelling is a tool of the total communication process. Accurate spelling facilitates both the expression of the student's own thoughts in written form and his reading of other people's thoughts.

A spelling program should help a student to attain these goals:

1. Find purposes for communicating some of the student's ideas in writing.
2. Spell correctly the words which are meaningful or useful to him in his writing.
3. Form effective study habits for spelling.
4. Develop an interest in correct spelling and take pride in ability to spell.
5. Find a method best suited to him for learning to spell words he needs in his writing.
6. Develop independence in the use of spelling study skills.
7. Develop attitudes and habits that promote ease of expression in writing.

For a student to attain these goals, the spelling program must fit his background of experience, his learning capacities, and his needs as a learner and writer. Words studied should be those functional for him at his level of growth.

The teacher chooses spelling words from three main sources--a student's personal list made from words he uses in his own writing, vocabulary the student is using in his other current activities, and spelling textbooks containing a core of words commonly used by children and adults.

When spelling textbooks are used, the teacher should choose books of appropriate levels and adapt the contents to needs of students. Whatever the source, words should be chosen for their usefulness in the student's

own listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The student's word power and spelling independence should be stressed, not just drill.

Ideally, spelling should be integrated with all subjects of the curriculum and should receive attention throughout the school day. Most students cannot be expected to learn the spelling of all words encountered in the content areas, but they should be helped to learn words of special importance.

For enrichment of the spelling program, teachers offer such studies as the way language grows and changes, interesting word derivations, prefixes and suffixes, synonyms and antonyms, word inventions, and word connotations.

A Student's Skills and Understanding of Spelling

Readiness Phase	Introduced or Reviewed	Reinforced	Extended or Refined
Develops a spelling awareness	K-1		
Has knowledge of the alphabet	K-1		
Sees that words are composed of different letters	K-1		
Hears differences in the ways words are said	K-1		
Uses and understands the spoken language	K-1		
Relates spoken language to printed symbols	K-1		
Recognizes some words, such as his name labels	K-1		
Written Phase			
Copies words correctly	1	2-6	2-6
Copies sentences correctly	1	2-6	2-6

	Introduced or Reviewed	Reinforced	Extended or Refined
Uses the process of reception--recognizing letters, noting their sequence, and associating sounds and knowledge of word structure with sounds individually or in patterns	1	2-6	2-6
Uses the process of recall--remembering the sequence of letters and/or making associations which aid in achieving the correct sequence	1	2-6	2-6
Learns to spell most words needed in his writings	1	2-6	2-6
Uses available sources of help in spelling words: picture dictionaries, and commercial dictionaries	1	2-6	2-6
Begins to proofread for spelling errors	2	3-6	3-6
Begins to develop the ability to use derived forms through discovery and/or instruction of spelling generalizations	2	3-6	3-6
Distinguishes between spellings of common homonyms in his writing by understanding the meaning of these words in context	2	3-6	3-6

Minimum Requirements for Handwriting, K-6

Handwriting should be viewed as a means of expressing ideas and not as an end in itself. Because writing refines the thinking process, the handwriting through which these ideas are expressed should be neat and comfortable for the individual to use. Therefore, the goals of handwriting are to teach the child to write legibly and at a speed appropriate to the purpose of communication and thinking.

Handwriting is a complex skill involving muscles and mind, and its mastery is closely related to the physical and mental development of the child. The forms of letters and movement in making the letters need direct teaching at a scheduled time during the day. This is not to say that handwriting-skill instruction should be divorced from other segments of language arts instruction. On the contrary, most of the activities for teaching handwriting improvement include careful attention to handwriting in connection with all assignments. Evaluative criticism and recent research indicate that a combination of systematic instruction and incidental instruction achieves the desired result of legible handwriting.

In manuscript and in cursive writing there is a need for specific instruction in letter formation, size, shape, slant, spacing, alignment, and correct position for sitting, holding a pencil, and placing paper. Neat writing habits, lack of tension, pleasant attitude, and self-evaluation are other attributes to be encouraged. This direction, however, should be the base for further instruction rather than a replacement of incidental instruction in other assignments.

The young child has an enthusiastic attitude about learning to write when he realizes that through writing, ideas are expressed. This positive attitude can be maintained, and habits of neat, legible writing can be developed by teachers through proper instruction and by students through analysis of their own written work. As a child begins to learn to write, he starts making a self-evaluation of letter formation, spacing, slant or lack of slant, alignment, and neatness. His diagnostic approach to handwriting should be encouraged until it becomes a habit which is followed all of his life.

Manuscript is taught before cursive writing because a young child can make the circles, semi-circles, and straight lines which are the strokes of manuscript without too much difficulty. The pencil is lifted after each stroke, thus making writing easier on the muscles. Also, the manuscript alphabet is similar to printed material which a child is beginning to read.

Customarily, cursive writing is introduced at the end of the second grade or at the beginning of the third grade when most children have developed physically and mentally to the point where they can master it. As a transition is made from manuscript to cursive writing, the similarities between letter forms of the two systems are pointed out to the learner. This knowledge helps the individual in the transition to writing a new system of symbols.

Attention should be given to the left-handed child who may find writing uncomfortable and tedious if he tries to follow all directions given to right-handed children. Such a child needs to be given instruction in the way to place the paper, hold a pencil, etc., which will make

the writing easier and clearer for him. Teachers need to know how to meet the needs of the left-handed student.

Handwriting Readiness Activities for Kindergarten and Grade One

Cutting and pasting
Finger painting
Crayon drawings
Working with puzzles
Modeling with clay
Playing of simple musical instruments such as drums, xylophones, portable pianos and organs, and student-made instruments
Drawing or scribbling in sand, in air, or on the chalkboard
Group or individual drawings which include circles and straight lines

Handwriting Transfer Activities for Kindergarten or Grades One and Two

Following directional guides in letter formation
Labeling pictures
Writing on chalkboard
Experience chart writing--teacher, groups, individuals

A Student's Understanding and Skills of Handwriting

The understanding and skills described below are needed for the child to develop legible handwriting at the flexible speed he wants. They are given as a guide to stimulate the thinking of teachers and are not presented as rigid requirements.

	Introduced	Mastered	Refined
Is aware that writing is a form of communication and thinking	K-1		
Knows directions of left and right	K-1		
Knows left hand, foot, side as opposed to right hand, foot, side	K-1		
Is aware of size	K-1		
Is aware of shape	K-1		
Is aware of spatial relationships	K-1		
Listens and follows directions	K-1		

	Introduced	Mastered	Refined
Holds writing instrument correctly and keeps paper in proper position	1		
Sits fairly still with two feet on floor; leans slightly forward at desk that is correct height for him	1		
Writes on wide-lined paper in manuscript	1		
Follows instructions for beginning strokes and for direction of strokes to make letters	1		
Follows instructions regarding size of letters and proportions of parts of letters	1		
Follows instructions regarding spacing of letters and words	1		
Observes two-finger margin at left side of paper	1		
Recognizes and can say names of all the letters of the alphabet	1-2		
Can write all upper-case and lower-case letters	1-2		
Can write his name from memory	1		
Keeps letters well rounded		2	3
Makes firm, straight lines		2	3
Spaces letters closely and evenly within letters		2	3
Places all letters properly on line		2	3
Writes all letter forms and numbers correctly by end of year		2	3
Consistently maintains an acceptable sitting position and hand position		2	3
Shifts motor skills from manuscript to cursive letters	2	3	4
Places paper correctly for cursive writing	2	3	

	Introduced	Mastered	Refined
Connects letters within a word without lifting pencil	2	3	4
Understands similarity between manuscript letters and cursive letters	2	3	
Can write all cursive letters in alphabet		3	4
Uses correct slant for cursive letters	2	3	
Demonstrates awareness of alignment of written material		3	4
Practices neatness in all handwriting		5	
Proofreads handwriting	4	5	6
Writes easily and clearly in cursive writing	4	5	6
Writes with the speed necessary for the task at hand		5	6
Demonstrates a positive attitude toward all types of handwriting	3	4	5
Enjoys producing clear, attractive, legible writing		5	6
Maintains skill in legible manuscript	4	5	6
Transfers writing skill to simple business letter, the content of which is appropriate to the realistic use of the age level		5	
Transfers all skills to experience stories		5	
Uses various forms of ink in parts of writing		5	
Shows improved speed while maintaining accuracy and neatness		5	
Takes notes either cursively or in manuscript or both		6	

	Introduced	Mastered	Refined
Proofreads and corrects handwriting, making a neat final copy		6	
Meets grade standards of legibility and speed as measured by instruments such as Ayers' Handwriting Scale		6	

Minimum Requirements for Creative Writing, K-6

A child needs opportunities to express himself in his own way. He needs encouragement and stimulation through enriching, vivid experiences and opportunities to let go.

The creative writing program in the elementary years begins with teaching the student to compose stories orally about those things which are most familiar and interesting to him. As he begins to translate oral vocabulary into writing, the process of composition focuses upon written expression of increasing complexity.

Using the functional writing section of this Alabama Course of Study as a guide, the alert teacher will note many opportunities for helping children develop creative writing abilities as well.

The child's creativity flourishes in a relaxed and open classroom atmosphere. Such techniques as informal drama, storytelling, listening to music, and listening to poetry release the child's imagination and his desire to excel. Children delight in each other's tall tales, rollicking humor, strange adventures, and poetic images. Openly or secretly, they are pleased to see their own words inscribed in a class book.

A Teacher's Method of Developing Creative Writing

1. Motivate the child
   - With skits based on episodes in the lives of great men and women
   - With dramatization of folk tales
   - By learning songs and dances from faraway places
   - By planning backdrops for puppet shows
   - By improvising a good-health play
   - With any other good experience stirring the imagination

2. Develop vocabulary
   - Training all the senses
   - Keeping folders of vivid words
   - Using word cards

3. Recall the form of writing
   - Stories
   - Poems
   - Plays
   - Other works

4. Provide a time for writing

5. Share the composition

6. Improve the composition

A Student's Understanding and Skills in Creative Writing

Enhances his thinking process, especially his imagination and his divergency

Develops appreciation for the writing of others

Uses writing as a means for releasing self-expression

Shares creative experiences, verbalizing in collaboration with other people

Discovers words that sparkle in his mind and other people's minds

Develops needed writing skills through independent creative activities

Satisfies personal needs through creative writing

Develops desire to continue writing through the years

Masters practical language skills useful in all kinds of writing

Understands the importance of good motives in writing

Sees that writing can be pure, unadulterated fun

Agrees with those who say, "Creativity is contagious. Get exposed!"

Minimum Requirements for Writing, Grades 7-12

Writing is perhaps the worst taught and the best taught of all subjects in the secondary schools of Alabama.

If classes are too overcrowded for individual attention and theme reading, writing suffers. If students and teachers are not listening to each other, writing suffers. If students are poor readers, writing suffers. If students have been turned off by years of red-penciling, writing suffers. If some teachers would rather teach literature most of the time, writing suffers. If formal grammar usurps the composition period, writing suffers.

A persistent problem has been the erroneous opinion that instruction in grammar can substitute satisfactorily for instruction in writing. In Four Problems in Teaching English: A Critique of Research, J. Stephen Sherwin states, "Research still overwhelmingly supports the contention that instruction in formal grammar is an ineffective and inefficient way to help students achieve proficiency in writing."[1]

Alabama is not alone in the inadequacy of writing instruction. As reported by the National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education, "Perhaps the most distressing finding in the National Assessment is the low level of competency in the mechanics of writing at every age level. The evidence mandates increased emphasis on these skills, even at some cost from reduced emphasis on the teaching of literature."[2]

However, the Alabama writing scene has its sunshine too. Writing

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[1]J. Stephen Sherwin, Four Problems in Teaching English: A Critique of Research (Scranton, International Book Co., 1969, p. 168).

[2]The National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education, The Reform of Secondary Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1973, p. 44).

programs are succeeding wherever administrators and teachers and taxpayers have created writing classes small enough for individual attention to young writers and their compositions. Writing programs are succeeding in friendly classrooms where interesting experiences motivate writing. Writing programs are succeeding whenever teachers draw from a treasure trove of ideas for writing. Writing programs are succeeding whenever teachers apply that old valid formula for a writer, "Read, read, read, and write, write, write!" Writing programs are succeeding when teachers and students rotate the roles of writer, reader, and constructive critic.

Paramount in successful programs is the teacher's belief that every young person can discover his own unique world by observing, communicating, living wholeheartedly, and writing. Such a teacher cherishes the privilege of encouraging that writing, and visiting that special world.

Fortunately, many Alabama teachers are teaching writing well, and many others are doing the best they can in spite of unfavorable conditions. Alabama schools can be proud of graduating thousands of competent writers, not only the winners of NCTE Achievement Awards and other writing contests, but all young people who are using their writing skills in vocations, advanced studies, and community life.

This Alabama Course of Study for Language Arts highly recommends the kind of school environment and the quality of teaching conducive to good writing--and equally favorable to other language arts. Good writing is the peak of the mountain, signifying that all underlying parts are sound.

A Student's Skills and Techniques of Writing, Grade 7

Writes sentences for various purposes
- Asking a question
- Giving an answer
- Expressing a wish
- Stating a personal attitude or opinion
- Stating a request or an order
- Describing how something looks, sounds, tastes, smells, or feels
- Telling an action
- Extending welcome or kindness
- Expressing thanks or appreciation
- Expressing regret or sympathy
- Offering congratulations or encouragement
- Defining a word
- Using a new word
- Evaluating a speech
- Serving any other good purpose

Writes friendly notes and letters
- Suiting language to correspondent and intention
- Observing appropriate usage and form

Writes expository paragraphs
- Selecting a topic of personal interest, sometimes in keeping with social studies theme of self-development and self-understanding in a changing world
- Limiting the topic
- Writing a topic sentence to express both subject and attitude
- Including supporting details
- Following logical order
- Using clear, specific language

Writes other papers related to studies or personal interests: responses to films or books, skits based on a reading selection, news items, diaries, reports, stories, poems, etc.

Applies grammatical principles to writing
- Thinking before writing
- Expressing each idea clearly and completely
- Constructing effective sentences
- Choosing words to fit meaning and function
- Inflecting verbs accurately
- Inflecting nouns and pronouns accurately
- Observing noun-verb agreement
- Observing pronoun-antecedent agreement
- Substituting pronouns for nouns appropriately
- Punctuating sentences clearly
- Using capital letters as needed
- Spelling words correctly
- Writing legibly

A Student's Skills and Techniques of Writing, Grade 8

Continues writing sentences for various purposes
- Serving purposes previously mentioned
- Stating a principle
- Providing an example or an illustration
- Quoting a friend or a book
- Explaining cause and effect
- Showing comparison or contrast
- Giving a reason
- Stating an argument

Continues to write friendly notes and letters, improving style and form

Continues writing expository paragraphs
- Improving and refining techniques mentioned previously
- Selecting relevant details to support the topic sentence
- Deleting sentences not relevant to topic sentence
- Developing some paragraphs by example or illustration
- Giving personal reaction to a book, film, recording, or work of art
- Interpreting citizenship roles, in keeping with themes of social studies
- Writing on a variety of topics

Writes narrative paragraphs
- Choosing an interesting happening, real or imagined
- Identifying persons or characters
- Explaining time, place, and circumstances
- Telling what happened
- Following chronological order
- Using action verbs

Writes other themes and reports related to studies and personal interests: newspaper stories, journals, book reviews, etc.

Applies grammatical principles to writing
- Thinking and planning before writing
- Reinforcing principles previously learned
- Choosing accurate words
- Expressing a complete thought
- Placing modifiers sensibly
- Controlling subordinate elements--prepositional phrases, appositives, etc.
- Identifying subject and predicate
- Writing some sentences with more than one clause
- Inflecting verbs, nouns, and pronouns according to their use in sentence
- Using the possessive case properly, including any required apostrophes
- Observing agreement of subject and very, pronoun and antecedent
- Punctuating sentences properly, including some quotations
- Using necessary capital letters

Spelling words correctly
Writing legibly
Proofreading
Making and using a style book

A Student's Skills and Techniques of Writing, Grade 9

Continues writing sentences to serve a variety of purposes
- Developing better techniques to serve all purposes previously mentioned
- Making sentence outlines of reading material
- Making sentence outlines for a report or theme
- Entering ideas in a journal or diary
- Writing a snapshot sentence of a person, animal, place, action, etc.
- Experimenting with sentence patterns after analyzing model sentences
- Rewriting defective sentences from class themes

Continues letter writing
- Improving style and form of friendly letters
- Learning to write social notes, especially thank-you notes, invitations, and replies to invitations

Continues to write expository paragraphs
- Improving and refining techniques mentioned earlier
- Using a variety of topics
- Working from an outline
- Choosing and limiting some topics from ninth grade social studies: Alabama heritage, current affairs, ecology, law, careers, etc.

Continues to write narrative paragraphs, improving techniques

Writes descriptive paragraphs
- Finding an interesting subject
- Observing with all senses
- Selecting sensory details
- Choosing appropriate method to arrange details: spatial, order of importance, order for contrast or comparison, etc.
- Using vivid language--especially strong verbs and specific nouns
- Using fresh comparisons
- Conveying dominant impression or mood through details and word choice

Writes other themes related to studies and personal interests

Applies grammatical principles to writing
- Thinking before writing
- Choosing accurate words
- Expressing complete thoughts
- Avoiding fragments, except those required in exclamations, quoted conversation, etc.
- Analyzing patterns in model sentences and student's own sentences
- Experimenting with various sentence patterns
- Expanding basic sentences by compounding and modification
- Combining pairs of sentences to achieve coordination and subordination
- Using parallel structure effectively
- Using effective modifiers and placing them sensibly

Continuing attention to agreement of sentence elements: subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent, etc.
Examining usage problems and solving them in writing
Following a style sheet for capitalization and punctuation
Expanding vocabulary
Proofreading

A Student's Skills and Techniques of Writing, Grade 10

Continues to write sentences for a variety of purposes
- Improving and refining techniques already mentioned
- Using balanced construction for comparison or contrast
- Subordinating some ideas to others, appropriately using phrases and subordinate clauses
- Revising sentences for clarity and sound structure
- Writing brief critiques of listening experiences

Continues to write friendly letters and social notes
- Improving content, form, and style
- Writing bread-and-butter notes, get-well notes, etc.
- Writing sympathy letters
- Writing congratulatory notes

Continues to write expository paragraphs
- Improving and refining techniques previously mentioned
- Comparing or contrasting two subjects
- Choosing and limiting some topics related to social studies: other cultures in the United States and abroad, ecology, humanities, minority studies, home and family, etc.

Continues to write narrative paragraphs, improving techniques

Continues to write descriptive paragraphs
- Developing techniques already cited
- Telling about experiences in appreciative listening

Writes other papers related to school studies and personal interests

Applies grammatical principles to writing
- Thinking before writing
- Improving techniques previously mentioned
- Analyzing strengths and weaknesses of own writing
- Sharing writing with peers for encouragement and helpful criticism
- Serving as an appreciative and critical reader for peers
- Analyzing usage problems, such as unnecessary shifts in person, number, voice, and tense; tense forms; pronoun case and agreement; subject-verb agreement; and double negatives
- Varying usage for formal and informal writing
- Recognizing and using abstract, concrete, or specific details
- Distinguishing between main ideas and supporting details
- Dividing details into categories
- Using linking expressions to provide coherence
- Developing proficiency in use of punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and manuscript form
- Noting trends in contemporary usage

A Student's Skills and Techniques of Writing, Grade 11

Continues to write sentences for a variety of purposes
- Improving and refining techniques already mentioned
- Writing sentences that provide transitions between paragraphs of an expository composition
- Writing précis
- Practicing loose, periodic, and inverted sentences
- Practicing declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences

Continues to write letters and notes
- Reviewing and improving techniques of writing various social notes and friendly letters
- Learning to write business letters

Continues to write expository compositions
- Improving and refining techniques previously mentioned
- Choosing and limiting an interesting subject
- Formulating a thesis, theme, or summary sentence that expresses a definite attitude
- Making a topic or sentence outline
- Using an effective topic sentence
- Gathering plenty of supporting material
- Providing good transitions
- Writing a rough draft
- Conferring and revising
- Writing and polishing a final draft
- Sharing paper with group or class

Continues to write narratives, improving techniques
- Telling longer stories
- Using subjects and themes from American literature, American history, and personal life

Participates in other writing according to personal interest: personal essay, journal, diary, critical review, interview, newspaper article, poem, play, epigram, etc.

Continues to write descriptive paragraphs, sharpening observation, and improving imagery

Applies grammatical principles to writing
- Reviewing all previous techniques
- Using complete sentences
- Using a variety of sentence patterns
- Being self-critical to eliminate sentence fragment, run-on sentences, shifts in person or tense, and other errors
- Using clear and concise language
- Referring to dictionary, thesaurus, handbook, and other references as needed to write accurately

A Student's Skills and Techniques of Writing, Grade 12

Continues to write sentences for a variety of purposes
- Improving and refining techniques previously mentioned
- Practicing various sentence patterns and sentence lengths
- Using rhetorical questions
- Writing original examples of figures of speech

Continues to write letters
- Improving style, content, and form of social correspondence
- Improving content, form, and effectiveness of business letters
- Writing letters of application
- Filling out forms

Writes research reports of three to five paragraphs
- Choosing and limiting an interesting topic, possibly related to another class
- Locating three or more sources of information
- Taking notes from sources
- Organizing materials for writing
- Outlining
- Writing effective expository paragraphs, improving on previous techniques
- Giving proper credit to references for ideas and quotations
- Writing bibliography
- Revising and proofreading
- Preparing final copy in good form

Continues to write short expository, descriptive, and narrative compositions
- Refining techniques
- Using literature, social studies, science, personal experiences, etc., as sources of ideas on human issues and values

Continues to write other documents according to personal interests and needs: literary analysis, journal, dialogue, research paper, essay, newspaper story, editorial, music review, etc.

Applies grammatical principles to writing
- Reinforcing all previous techniques
- Proofreading carefully without being reminded
- Using good manuscript form
- Choosing formal or informal language according to purposes of writing
- Choosing standard English dialect in writing unless the purpose of the writing is better served by nonstandard
- Continuing to use variety of references and methods in expanding vocabulary
- Cultivating personal style

ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLS AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Although the minimum requirements set forth on page 6 of this Alabama Course of Study should be observed in the junior high or middle school, teachers may occasionally decide to offer mini-courses to serve special interests or needs. A mini-course of two to six weeks' duration can be fitted into a regular semester without disruption of school schedules.

Any two teachers whose classes meet the same period can cooperate in team teaching the same mini-course, or they can regroup their students for different mini-courses. Among the popular subjects for such mini-courses are career exploration, humanities, folklore, popular song lyrics, local authors, and class newspapers or magazines.

Another kind of alternative program often successful in the junior high or middle school is the combining of language arts with another discipline, usually social studies or fine arts. With careful planning, teachers can give both disciplines due emphasis, yet demonstrate the interrelationships.

Further ideas for enrichment appear in the section titled "Special Electives Related to Language Arts."

Teachers in middle schools and junior high schools are invited to send their course outlines to the Alabama State Department of Education and to request copies of syllabi obtained by the State Department from other school systems.

Encouragement

To their credit, many Alabama teachers of high school English are creating elective programs for the benefit of their students. When students, teachers, administrators, and the community are involved in an orderly process of program development, the resulting electives can serve to motivate students and to facilitate their language growth. As fully documented in NCTE publications, the elective programs in the nation as well as in the state present numerous advantages over traditional programs. If properly developed, elective programs serve the needs of individual students and stay abreast of the times through yearly revision. The teacher, as well as the student, may profit and thereby be more enthusiastic in a program which allows him to choose subjects he can teach most effectively.

Caution

If not properly planned and implemented, an elective program can demoralize teachers and frustrate students. Among the bad possibilities are imbalance of courses, a lack of skill-development courses, too many literature courses, students electing to take courses out of sequence, too many preparations for each teacher, lack of needed materials, and scheduling conflicts.

On the other hand, if the elective program is carefully planned and well supplied, it will succeed.

Suggested Procedure for Developing an Elective English Program in Grades 10-12

1. Bring together two or more teachers who are interested in exploring elective programs.

2. Read and discuss references such as these: Alternatives in English: a Critical Appraisal of Elective Programs by George Hillocks, Jr., Urbana, Illinois: ERIC/RCS, 1972; Project APEX, Trenton Public Schools, Trenton, Michigan, 1970, or later edition; "The English Curriculum" (a series of articles), English Journal, April, 1974; and current issues of the English Journal.

3. Survey students' interests, aptitudes, achievements, and needs.

4. Consider whether these students can be served best by (a) the minimum requirements program outlined in previous sections of this Alabama Course of Study; (b) the minimum program plus certain electives; (c) a new program with sequences of electives in oral language, reading, writing, literature, media, etc.

5. If a new program of electives looks promising, then write a preliminary proposal for development of such a program. Remember that electives lasting a semester or year are much easier to schedule than mini-courses. Also remember that in schools with grades nine through twelve, teachers have usually preferred to schedule ninth graders for a foundation course lasting a full year.

6. With appropriate enthusiasm and patience, discuss the proposal with teachers, administrators, counselors, and students, winning their interest and support and welcoming their ideas.

7. Allow at least one year for development of a plan for an elective program.

8. With approval and assistance of administrators, schedule a series of planning sessions for teachers. Preferably these sessions should be conducted during released time or during a paid workshop.

9. In these meetings, organize teachers to write tentative (a) objectives; (b) methods; (c) sequence of course descriptions for each strand of English: oral language, reading, writing, literature, media, etc.; (d) lists of instructional materials and resources.

10. With assistance of administrators, arrange for teachers to visit schools that have elective programs. Observe classes. Talk with teachers and students.

11. Invite consultants from the Alabama State Department of Education, teacher education institutions, or other high schools to contribute to planning sessions.

12. Develop a questionnaire so that students may show their (a) ranking of objectives, (b) preference of learning methods, (c) choice of courses, (d) suggestions for materials, etc.

13. Analyze data from student questionnaires, achievement test scores, interest inventories, etc., to decide what courses should be offered.

14. Be sure to include enough skills courses and not too many advanced literature courses. Observe minimum requirements listed on page 6 of the Introduction of this Alabama Course of Study for Language Arts. Emphasize language processes, not merely content.

15. Write an outline for each course.

16. In cooperation with administrators, think of ways to obtain the variety of instructional materials essential to an elective program--textbooks on many levels, paperbacks, magazines, newspapers, films, recordings, etc.

17. Prepare a curriculum catalogue or letter explaining to students and their parents the rationale of the new program, course descriptions, recommended sequence of courses, system of phasing to indicate difficulty of courses, materials to be used, etc.

18. Use whatever system of phasing you think will be best in your school. The APEX system is as follows:

    Phase 1 courses are designed for students who find reading, writing, speaking, and thinking quite difficult and have serious problems with basic skills.

    Phase 2 courses are created for students who do not have serious difficulty with basic skills but need to improve and refine them and can do so best by learning at a somewhat slower pace.

    Phase 3 courses are particularly for those who have an average command of the basic language skills and would like to advance beyond these basic skills but do so at a moderate rather than an accelerated pace.

    Phase 4 courses are for students who learn fairly rapidly and have good command of the basic language skills.

    Phase 5 courses offer a challenge to students who have excellent control of basic skills and who are looking for stimulating academic learning experiences.

19. Talking with administrators and faculty, decide methods for successfully introducing students and parents to the new program.

20. Provide counseling for students so that they choose courses wisely. Among those counseling should be English teachers, guidance counselors, and parents.

21. From preliminary registration figures, decide how many sections of each course are needed.

22. Make teaching assignments on the basis of teachers' preferences, expertise, and equitable loads.

23. Work with other faculty members to design a workable master schedule of classes.

24. With assistance of administrators and counselors, schedule students into classes, adjusting any course conflicts.

25. With the help of students as well as teachers, evaluate electives every year, revising, deleting, or adding courses to keep all offerings relevant and beneficial.

26. Change teaching assignments often enough for teachers to grow and for courses to improve. Share the load on lower-phase courses.

27. Exchange good ideas with other schools: send successful course outlines to the Alabama State Department of Education.

Suggested Elective Courses

This section of the Alabama Course of Study for Language Arts offers suggestions to systems seeking to develop elective programs. Skill areas are presented along with sample course titles. Course titles should show the emphasis of the course as well as its appeal to students. Each school is encouraged to select its own courses and titles according to the needs of its students.

Reading and Literature Courses

An elective program should provide courses which enable a student to master reading skills and to improve his personal reading habits. Course offerings may range from corrective reading in which basic skills are taught to advanced reading emphasizing comprehension, speed, techniques for different genres, and personal selection of materials.

Sample titles:

Corrective Reading	Individualized Reading
Developmental Reading I and II	Independent Study

Literature courses should encompass literary works past and present with emphasis on the interests and needs of students in the individual school. Beginning with students of a particular phase level, the course should offer appropriate experiences for enjoyment of reading, expansion of interests and knowledge, development of reading skills, analysis of various types of literature, growth of critical judgment, understanding of people and the world, and clarification of values.

Sample titles:

Literary Exploration	American Scene
Introductory Literature	Humor and Satire
Science Fiction	Myth and Legend
American Heritage	Nobel Prize Authors
English Literature	English Fiction
Poetry Seminar	Drama
Bible as Literature	Literature of the South
Utopian Literature	World Literature
Contemporary World Literature	Great Books

Writing and Grammar Courses

A wide spectrum of writing and grammar courses should serve all students: those needing fundamentals of writing and usage and those seeking personal style and polished technique.

Sample titles:

Writing Lab I and II	Vocational English
Practical Grammar and Usage	Business English
Advanced Composition	Creative Writing
Journalism I and II	Newspaper Staff
Literary Magazine Staff	Yearbook Staff

Listening, Speaking, and Theatre Arts Courses

Courses in this category strengthen fundamental listening and speaking skills and enable the student to research, organize, and present material. Audience appreciation and critical judgment are

promoted as well as sequenced skills for the speaker, debater, actor, director, or stage technician.

Sample titles:

- Communications
- Speech Experiences
- Debate I and II
- Theatre I and II
- Values and Concepts
- Speech I and II
- Oral Interpretation

Media Courses

Now that American boys and girls average more hours in front of the television set than in the classroom, importance of media cannot be underestimated. Every young person needs to study mass media and their effects on people. Courses in media should help students to develop personal standards for evaluation and selection of media. For interested students, courses should also offer opportunities to make recordings, slides, films, newspapers, or multimedia presentations.

Sample titles:

- Mass Media and Contemporary Society
- Film Study
- Creative Media
- Television Workshop
- Filmmaking

Materials and Resources

Appropriate materials are essential to the success of electives. Depending on the nature of the course, these materials may include textbooks, library collections, paperbacks, magazines, newspapers, films, filmstrips, recordings, pictures, videotapes, etc. Certain electives require typewriters, tape recorders, cameras, projectors, video tape recorders, printing presses, etc.

SPECIAL ELECTIVES RELATED TO LANGUAGE ARTS

Whether a school follows a minimum program as outlined in earlier sections of this Course of Study or develops an elective program, the school will undoubtedly offer a number of special electives related to language arts.

Journalism

Whenever possible, a journalism course should serve as a prerequisite to work on the school newspaper staff. A school may offer special courses for publication of a newspaper and a yearbook. It is suggested that each publication be managed through a class rather than as an after-school activity.

Creative Writing

A course in creative writing should offer students opportunity to develop their special talents through study and practice of various forms and techniques.

A school may offer a separate course for publication of a literary and art magazine.

Reading--Corrective or Developmental

For the student who reaches junior high or senior high school with reading deficiencies, a reading course may be offered in place of or in addition to the regular English course. If it is offered in place of the regular English course, it should include listening, speaking, and writing skills as well as reading. The class should be small enough to facilitate individualized teaching, should have a variety of appealing materials on appropriate reading levels, and should be taught by a personable and well-prepared reading teacher.

For students who want to develop advanced skills, classes in developmental reading could be instituted.

Speech

Although listening and speaking are built into every year of the language arts program, schools may offer additional courses in remedial speech, debate, forensics, public address, speech communication, fundamentals of speech, and advanced speech techniques.

Theatre Arts

A course or series of courses in theatre arts may include any or all of the following: acting, directing, technical theatre (lighting, staging, costumes, make-up, properties), history of the theatre, business management, and Readers' Theatre. The theatre arts program is to be thoroughly explained in the projected fine arts section of this course of study.

Humanities

Although many subjects taught in Alabama schools lend themselves to a humanistic approach, some schools may decide to offer a special course entitled Humanities. Various patterns of organization are possible: themes of man, man and his arts, chronological survey of human philosophy, etc. Planning for a humanities course begins with an interdisciplinary team of teachers including English teachers and others. Possibilities for a humanities course are more thoroughly explored in other sections of this course of study, especially in social studies and the projected section on humanities and the fine arts.

Independent Study

English departments in some schools may want to develop an independent study program in English to serve certain academically advanced or gifted students. Assistance in establishing such a course for credit or noncredit may be obtained from the Alabama State Department of Education in Montgomery.

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